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SUBJECT: SOUTH ASIA WORKSHOP ON IMPLEMENTATION OF UNSCR
1540

REF: 08 STATE 110381

¶1. This is an action request. Please see paragraph 6.

¶2. SUMMARY: Washington is interested in obtaining Sri Lanka,s agreement to host a regional workshop on implementation of UNSCR 1540 in June 2009. This workshop is consistent with implementation of UNSCRs 1540 and 1810. This cable provides U.S. views for Sri Lanka and establishes direct coordination between Washington and Colombo to organize the workshop on or about June 23-25, 2009 in Colombo. See para 4 for info to USUN. END SUMMARY.

¶3. BACKGROUND: Washington supports the work of the UN 1540 Committee to ensure states develop a realistic national action plan to address the gaps identified in 1540 implementation and demonstrate the political will to implement this action plan. These steps will ensure that UNSCR 1540 implementation becomes a key component of international efforts to prevent terrorists and other actors from obtaining WMD. Washington believes this workshop will ensure that the South Asia countries understand the strong requirement for national implementation, since the 1540 Committee, in and of itself, has limited capacity to provide the regional follow up that the report of the Committee calls for to buttress worldwide efforts. END BACKGROUND.

¶4. Note to USUN. This workshop is proposed to be hosted by the Government of Sri Lanka using voluntary funding contributions from the United States (ISN,s EXBS Program) and will be conducted in cooperation with the UN 1540 Committee and the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (see REFTEL). As such, this workshop is being provided to the UN 1540 Committee as an in-kind U.S. contribution. The ISN Bureau and its contractor Sandia National Laboratories are working closely with the UN Office of Disarmament Affairs and the UN 1540 Committee on the formulation of the agenda, the selection of speakers, and the logistics of this workshop, and will work closely with host country officials in Sri Lanka as well.

¶5. The Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) program, managed by the State Department,s ISN Bureau, is providing funding for this workshop to be conducted with logistical support through a contract with Sandia National Laboratories. The Department of Energy,s Megaports Initiative will work to provide, in conjunction with the Sri Lankan government, a port tour that includes the Megaports facility. The logistical support to be coordinated by Sandia National Laboratories includes, but is not limited to: making arrangements for a workshop venue; coffee breaks and working lunches; simultaneous translation services, if needed; arranging for speakers and presenters; and covering travel costs for 10-12 speakers and for the travel costs of 24 participants (3 from each country invited). EXBS funds cannot be transmitted directly to the Sri Lankan government for expenditure.

¶6. ACTION REQUEST. Embassy Colombo is requested to share the

proposal for the workshop, including the logistical arrangements, with Sri Lanka MFA and to confirm Sri Lanka's commitment to host this 1540 implementation workshop. Embassy should report back to Washington NLT 24 February 2009 on Sri Lanka's response to our request to host this workshop.

The workshop details include:

-- Proposed Date: June 23-25, 2009

-- Proposed venue: Hilton Colombo

-- Proposed country invitees: SAARC Member States -- Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

-- POCs: The State Department points of contact are 1540 Coordinator Thomas Wuchte (WuchteTA@state.gov, 202-736-4275) and EXBS Program Manager Dan Forbes (ForbesRD@state.gov, 202-647-0517).

(Note: Post should inform Sri Lanka MFA that POCs will e-mail a draft invitation letter example and a draft agenda. All logistical support for this workshop will be provided by the State Department and its contractor Sandia National Laboratories in cooperation with the UN 1540 Committee and the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs. As host country, Sri Lanka may be invited to address the workshop, host a conference dinner/reception, and host a tour of the Megaports facility at the Port of Colombo. DOE/SLD will provide transportation between the hotel and the Port of Colombo.)

-- Workshop Background: We hope the primary focus of the workshop will be on furthering UNSCR 1540 implementation through identifying how South Asia states can develop their own national implementation plans. The workshop will focus attention on the need for nations to prepare national implementation plans as suggested in the Report of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (25 April 2006), which includes the following recommendation in paragraph 136: &States should be encouraged to provide additional information on national implementation as an ongoing process, including for instance, a road map or an action plan for addressing remaining measures to be taken to fully implement the resolution, taking into account the analysis provided by the Committee.8

17. Washington greatly appreciates Embassy assistance in supporting this important workshop on UNSCR 1540 implementation. Please address further inquiries on this initiative to the workshop POCs: ISN 1540 Coordinator Thomas Wuchte (WuchteTA@state.gov, 202-736-4275) and EXBS Program Manager Dan Forbes (ForbesRD@state.gov, 202-647-0517).
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